Display of military might

*308. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are allowing the services to display their full military might;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the future action plan prepared in this regard; and

(d) the present status of coming Republic Day celebrations, to be held in January, 2007?

SHRI MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) The Government have placed no restriction on display of military capabilities by the Services during the Republic Day and Services Day Parades. Keeping in view the national security interests, this display is organized to reinforce confidence of the nation in our defence preparedness and to motivate the youth to join the armed forces.

(d) The preparations by all the participating agencies for the forthcoming Republic Day celebrations on 26th January, 2007 are in full swing.

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, the Republic Day parade is an occasion for our Defence Forces to exhibit their strength to the nation and to the rest of the world. There are reports in the newspapers that it is slowly losing its charm, maybe, due to reduction of time; maybe, due to security reasons. I would like to know what steps are being taken to make it more attractive, enthusiatic and more inspiring.

SHRI A.K. ANTONY: Sir, the Republic Day parade is still more inspiring. People come to see it with great enthusiasm. Only thing is, in the past, this parade took more than thre hours. There was a request from certain quarters to reduce the duration. So, of late, the parades are, now, limited to one hour and forty or forty-five minutes. But there is no restriction on the Armed Forces on the display of their might.

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, earlier one thousand five hundred students used to take part in six cultural events. But, now, it has been reduced to three teams, with six hundred students, from Delhi. Is there any proposal to increase the strength of students and events by bringing students from all over the country, without restricting it to Delhi only?

SHRI A.K. ANTONY: Sir, we have not restricted to Delhi only. Children from Delhi as well as children from Zonal Cultural Centres also included in the parade.

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Sir, my point was that the strength has been reduced to six hundred students from one thousand five hundred students.

SHRI A.K. ANTONY: That is because ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sir Ravi Shankar Prasad.

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Sir, we all are proud of our military might and our Armed Forces. But a very disturbing trend of psychological problem is emerging in our Armed Forces. There have been repeated instances of attack inside the cantonment. one *jawan* killing the other; recently, a Colonel was killed; sometimes a Major is killed. Recurrent instances of some kind of serious psychological problem, for a veriety of reasons, occuring in the Armed Forces, which was unheard of. My query to the hon. Minister is: Is the Government contemplating a serious kind of response to take care of this emerging problem, and what has been the result thereof? ...*(Interruptions)* And, yes, there have been suicidal cases as well.

SHRI A.K. ANTONY: In another context, I already answered this question in this House itself. There is nothing panicky about that. The Government is also concerned about suicides and also fratricides in the Armed Forces. We are taking serious steps to prevent them.

Regarding the psychological aspect, we have appointed a committee under Dr. Mandal. He is Director of DPR. He has been given two months time to study this. He has been given freedom to go to all areas, including the forward areas. He can meet anybody, including *jawans*. He will receive their complaints and suggestions. Once we get the report, we will take action to implement it.

DR. M.S. GILL: Mr Chairman, Sir, the question, basically, is about the Republic Day. I am linked deeply on both sides of the family with the Armed Forces, and continue to be so. I have the highest respect for them and, I think, some knowledge of them. And, I want to raise something for all sides of the House. It has been coming in the Press, also in very serious lectures. The question is not of lengthening the parade and giving

greater and greater display of the Armed Forces. There is a more serious problem for the National Capital. The way the Capital is constructed and the way we have the parade from Rashtrapati Bhawan down to India Gate and beyond, the city is divided into half and half. I have served in this Government for long. For the entire months of November, December, January, and February there is no work done by the Government, by the officers certainly, Ministers maybe. ..*(Interruptions)*.. Because we cannot get from this side to that side. The entire green belt of Delhi, which the citizens want is vandalised and destroyed. After the Parade, the Armed Forces do not even bother to clean it up. Parts of the lawn is cemented for ever. Are we going to destroy this heritage of the country? Yes; we are proud of the Armed Forces. Is it necessary to display them every year with outdated weapons? No country does it. Would you consider having the Parade, once in two years, or once in four years? America does not do it. India and Pakistan do it. ..*(Interruptions)*..

SHRI A.K. ANTONY: Sir, occasionally, similar suggestions were coming from many individuals. But after considering all aspects, successive Governments took a decision that there is no question of postponing the Parade. It will be a continuous thing; every year we will be having it. And it is the national demand. There are some inconveniences, but, year after year, we are trying to minimise the inconveniences to the citizens of Delhi.

As far as rehearsals are concerned, we are trying to have rehearsals only on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. The rehearsals except full dress rehearsal, are also restricted to the western side of India Gate. That way we are trying to minimise the difficulties of citizens. But, at the same time, more than anybody else, the citizens of Delhi are more anxious to have the Parade every year.

बाड़ लगाये जाने के कारण बंगलादेश के क्षेत्र में शामिल किए जाने वाले गांव

*309. **श्री राम जेठमलानी:**

श्री राज मोहिन्दर सिंह मजीठा:††

क्या गृह मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि भारत-बंगलादेश सीमा पर नानजिही से डावकी और डावकी से जालियाखोला क्षेत्र में 40 गांव भारत के सीमा पर फैंसिंग करते समय बंगलादेश की सीमा में जा रहे हैं;

††सभा में यह प्रश्न श्री राज मोहिन्दर सिंह मजीठा द्वारा पूछा गया।